

MAR 31 2008

Georgetown Central School
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Principal

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March 27, 2008

Susan A. Gendron
Commissioner
Maine Department of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0023

Dear Commissioner Gendron:

In accordance with the March 28, 2008 deadline, the Georgetown School Committee is filing this letter to update the Department of Education on the status of its efforts to seek a partner for consolidation in accordance with LD 499.

The Georgetown School Committee, accompanied by Superintendent Shuttleworth and attorney Peter Lowe, met with you on January 28, 2008. At this meeting we discussed the efforts that had been made by Georgetown to find a consolidation partner. Mr. Lowe followed up by sending you the attached letter dated February 12, 2008. Rather than repeat this letter, we are incorporating its contents by reference.

Our meeting with you was held in the wake of a 7-6 vote by the SAD 75 Board of Directors to reject our application to join the SAD 75/Lisbon RPC. This came after we voted unanimously to join this RPC. You offered to dispatch two representatives of the Department to meet with SAD 75 in order to explore whether this vote could be revisited based on some special education funding issues. We have been waiting for a progress report on this issue, and we understand that Ray Poulin recently told our Superintendent that the discussions with SAD 75 had not resulted in any change in position, and that this was not a viable option for us.

Therefore, without SAD 75/Lisbon as a practical consolidation option, we are left with no partner. To refresh your memory, we also approached Wiscasset and Brunswick and both school committees voted against us joining an RPC with them.

In the face of these rejections, we have continued to look at ways to achieve cost savings, and collaborate with other communities. We have submitted a Request for Proposals to a number of school districts for central office and administrative services. Responses to our RFP are due

on March 31, 2008. In addition, we have supported a legislative amendment to LD 910, and after developing a compromise, both RSU 1 and Georgetown supported legislation that would allow RSU 1 to contract with Georgetown for the continued education of Arrowsic students at the Georgetown Central School.

Georgetown has shown a commitment to pursue consolidation under LD 499 (in accordance with the wishes of our citizens), and has demonstrated good faith and due diligence in these efforts. For circumstances beyond our control, we have not been accepted by a consolidation partner. If the Department would like copies of documents which support these efforts, we would be glad to provide them.

We would also appreciate any guidance that you can offer school districts like us, who find themselves in the unique and unenviable position of having no consolidation partners. At this point, we must pursue an alternative plan, without consolidation, and it is our intent to contract with a school district for administrative services. The cost, and any savings from this arrangement, will be clearer when we have reviewed any proposals that we receive.

Please contact us with any questions.

Nina Roth-Welt
Chair Georgetown School Committee